1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

inclination for such communion are called kái, and their principal function is to cure and ward off disease. Of the Põrekamekra, Pohl writes:

"Sie haben in den Pflanzen ihrer heimatlichen Wälder durch Erfahrung mehrere Heilkräuter kennen gelernt, welche sie nun bey vorkommende n Fällen anwenden. So vertreiben sie z. B. das Fieber mit einer Dorstenia fol. rodunativ. Die Syphilis, welche leider häufiger vorkommt als man vermuten sollte, ... wird blos mit häufigem Waschen behandelt. Ophthalmie zeigte sich auch sehr häufig; gegen dieses Uebel sowie gegen Schlangenbisse sollen sie auch Arcana besitzen. Zur Heilung von Wunden wird der gekaute (?) Samen der Bixa brasiliensis [= urucú] verwendet. Zauberformeln fehlen bei diesen abergläubischen Menschen natürlich ebenfalls nicht. Segensprechungen, Zauberformeln und dergleichen werden sehr oft in ihren Krankheiten verwendet."[296]

This last method I have never witnessed.

Snethlage possibly rates Timbira medical lore too highly, but his text does not indicate which tribe he has in mind.[297] Ribeiro says:

"Curam geralmente as suas enfermidades com a sangria, e com o semente de urucú: A sangria fazem-a com uma navalha de canna verde a que chamam taboca.

(In general they cure sickness by blood-letting and with urucú seeds. They let blood with a little knife of green cane called taboca.)"[298]

Thus this author does not mention a blood-letting bow, as Snethlage assumes. Of all the Timbira tribes the Apinayé is the only one among whom I found this implement.

Medical lore is little developed among the Canella. The children rarely wear remedies and amulets attached to necklaces, wrist cords, or girdle cords. Since pretty nearly everyone tries his own luck at doctoring when sick, the medicine-man's role is rather subordinate. There are no pathological theories comparable to those of the Apinayé.[299] The Canella views are vacillating and confused, so that they have more confidence in Neobrazilian treatment than in their own. An enormous number of plant species yield roots, bark, and leaves for medicinal infusions, which are sometimes filtered with a wad of cotton through spirally twisted palm leaflets. During a seventeen-kilometer ride with me, Kentapí from the back of a horse pointed out some twenty steppe plants on the way and indicated their medicinal use. With such remedies, so far as I was able to learn, they attempt to cure themselves and others without following any true plan.

The manifold magico-medical application of urucú has been noted (p. 52). Another plant employed in this dual role in cases of sickness, particularly in epidemics, is the sucupira tree; the strong and odorous oil of the seeds is smelled against all conceivable diseases, especially catarrhs. Threatening epidemics are warded off by smoking oneself with the incense of the burnt green foliage of this tree or by lashing oneself with its twigs. This use rests on no medicinal virtues, but on the magical attributes of the tree, regarded by all Timbira as the symbol of strength and resistance. Another means for acquiring the toughness requisite for long begging journeys under unusual circumstances is to swallow several small grains of rolled quartz about 3 mm. in diameter from the sand of a creek.

Conjunctivitis is treated by washing the eyes with water into which the molten rosin of the jutahy tree (*Hymenaea* sp.) has been allowed to drip. Against muscular and articular pains the Indians apply an epiphyte (pr[kanyí'; Neobraz.: sumaré) which is steamed in hot ashes. When children at the breast fall ill, both parents drink an infusion from the bark of a steppe bush, mekakę're. The scraped bark of a small steppe tree called pekẽ'parkóp serves as a remedy for scabies, wounds on the ear loop, and head lice. Sometimes powdered charcoal is rubbed into

[296] Pohl, Reise, 2:197.
[297] Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 185.
[298] Ribeiro, Memoria, § 16.
[299] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 144 *et seq.*